

Collaborators: *Clay* magazine

Web information on collaborators listed in Summer 1923 edition of *Clay*:

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/lola-ridge>

Lola Ridge

1873–1941



Lola Ridge, photograph by Marjorie Content, 1935. Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College

Born Emily Ridge in Dublin, Ireland in 1873, Lola Ridge was Joseph Henry and Emma Reilly Ridge's only surviving child. When she was about six years old, Emma took her to New Zealand. At the age of 21, Lola Ridge married Peter Webster, a gold mine manager. When their marriage was failing, she left and enrolled at Trinity College in Sydney, New South Wales. There she studied painting at the Sydney Art School Julien Ashton and began writing poetry. She submitted a finished manuscript to A.G. Stephens, who had taken a great deal of her poetry for the Sydney Bulletin but did not publish it in book form. A copy of this early work is available at the Mitchell Library in Sydney and through Quale Press.

Ridge was a poet and champion of the working class. Politically active before socialism became fashionable among New York intellectuals, Ridge participated in protests, marches, and pickets with ferocious spirit. Her writing is vigorous and electric. She was, as Peter Quartermain described her, "the nearest prototype in her time of the proletarian poet of class conflict, voicing social protest or revolutionary idealism." Her collections include *Dance of Fire* (1935), *Firehead* (1930), *Red Flag* (1927), *Sun-up, and Other Poems* (1920), and *The Ghetto, and Other Poems* (1918).

Ridge moved to San Francisco in 1907 after her mother died. Though a 33-year-old divorcée, she held great hope for this fresh start. Rose Emily Ridge reinvented herself as Lola Ridge, poet and painter, and described herself as being only 23 years old. This fib about her age later caused friends to remark on her premature ill health and delicacy. When she died of pulmonary tuberculosis in 1941, even the New York Times printed her age as 57 and not 67.

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Ridge made her literary debut in North America in the journal *Overland Monthly*, which described her as “a young Australian poet and artist, who is not without fame in her own land.” Having left her mark on California’s literary scene, she moved to New York’s Greenwich Village.

For a while, Ridge supported herself writing advertising copy and popular fiction. She finally gave up this work to preserve her artistic integrity and energy and to remain true to her increasingly radical politics. By April 1909 she had published a poem in Emma Goldman’s radical journal *Mother Earth*. In 1911 Ridge began working as an artists’ model, an illustrator, a factory worker and an educational organizer. She married fellow radical David Laws on October 22, 1919. The two lived a life of poverty in a drafty cold-water apartment. William Carlos Williams mocked her ascetic artistic lifestyle, but Ridge was earnest in her dedication to the working poor and to the new literature. For a number of years, Ridge lived and worked in relative obscurity.

In 1918 the *New Republic* published Ridge’s sequence of poems called “The Ghetto.” The poem instantly drew attention, and later that year she published this and other poems in *The Ghetto, and Other Poems*. Likely influenced by her own experience living on the Lower East Side, many of the forty-three free-verse poems explore the life of Jewish immigrants in New York City’s ghettos. Critics found the work rough but powerful. Some critics were struck by the strong visual quality, as described by Bella Cohen in *New York Call*: “She has mixed her paints in the old way, but she has thrown her brush across the canvas with strange, bold strokes.” The shocking subject matter, such as the murder of a black baby by white women during the East St. Louis race riots, also made a bold impression on the literary scene. Ridge began publishing more of her poetry in journals such as the *Dial*, the *New Republic*, *Poetry*, and the *Literary Digest*.

Ridge became linked to a circle of poets involved in the journal *Others*, including William Carlos Williams, Alfred Kreymborg, Marianne Moore, and Waldo Frank. She worked as an associate editor of the journal until 1919, traveling to Chicago as a lecturer for The *Others* Lecture Bureau, where she spoke about “Woman and the Creative Will”, about how sexually constructed gender roles hinder female development ten years before Virginia Woolf wrote “A Room of One’s Own.” Ridge held regular gatherings in her home even after *Others* ceased publication.

In 1920 Ridge published a new book, *Sun-up, and Other Poems*, a collection of free-verse imagist poems. The title poem, based on Ridge’s childhood, made the greatest impression on critics. C.K. Scott commented in *Freeman* on the honesty of Ridge’s portrayal: “It is an authentic achievement in one of the most difficult fields of poetry—one of the few instances in which the simplicity of the child’s approach has been conveyed with conviction almost unmarred by conscious naiveté.” Some critics compared Ridge to James Joyce and H.D. Other poems in *Sun-up* revisit themes of political radicalism and workers’ lives and help distinguish Ridge’s work from that of other imagist poets.

Ridge became the American editor for Harold Loeb’s *Broom* in 1922 (which Loeb ran from Rome). What little salary Ridge earned was just barely enough to cover her living expenses. Ridge held weekly *Broom* salons, at which she momentarily gave up her dedication of poverty to feed tea and cakes to other writers. She also provided encouragement to writers and gathered pieces for *Broom*. Ridge resigned

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over workplace tensions and over the inclusion of Gertrude Stein in her American issue, whom she felt did not represent the US, and was no longer the avant garde. Idealistic and political, she found herself at odds with strict modernism. She wanted new fresh voices, like Jean Toomer whom she championed, to represent American modernism.

In the following years, Ridge's own work became slightly more formal, often veering towards the mystical and spiritual. She remained an active social protestor, arrested in a protest against the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti with Emma St. Vincent Millay, and in 1927 she published *Red Flag*, a collection containing a few poems celebrating the Russian revolution. Babette Deutsch praised the book in *New York Herald Tribune Books* when she wrote, "The fire, the earnestness, the bitter and honey savors are here as in her earlier work. She has been wrought upon by the years on their passing, but she has not been changed by them." In 1929 Ridge went to the artist retreat Yaddo in upstate New York to complete her next work, *Firehead* (1930). She stayed at Yaddo twice, in 1929 and 1930, and at MacDowell in 1920.

Ridge traveled to Mexico on a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1935, and published *Dance of Fire*, a less successful book. Though Ridge's fire and light metaphors for humanity's revolutionary spirit have occurred in previous work, her language and symbolism are more opaque in *Dance of Fire*. Quartermain faulted the poems for their elusiveness "by a private diction of extreme abstractness and hence imprecise suggestiveness. The substance of the poetry remains amorphous." Ridge was awarded the Shelley Memorial Award twice, in 1934 and 1935, Poetry magazine's Guarantor's prize in 1935, and the next year she won the Shelley Memorial Award.

Ridge died on May 19, 1941, in her home in Brooklyn, at the age of 67. S.A. DeWitt established the Lola Ridge Memorial Award in Poetry in her memory. Since her death she has been neglected by biographers and anthologies, unjustly so, according to Quartermain, who defended her importance: "Unlike most American left-wing writers she had firsthand knowledge of working-class life, she was enamored of large abstractions like 'the triumph of the working class,' and her literary career, which moves from the romanticized realism of *The Ghetto*, and *Other Poems* to the mannered symbolism of *Dance of Fire*, is coherent in its predilections, in its strengths and weaknesses."

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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Oppenheim

James Oppenheim (24 May 1882 – 4 August 1932) was an American poet, novelist, and editor.

A lay analyst and early follower of Carl Jung, Oppenheim was also a founder and editor of *The Seven Arts*.

Life and work

Oppenheim was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, on May 24, 1882, the son of Joseph and Matilda (Schloss) Oppenheim. His father died when he was six and his family's circumstances changed.[1] He was educated in public schools and at Columbia University.

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Oppenheim married Lucy Seckel and had two children, Ralph and James Jr. (alias Garrett). Seckel filed for divorce following the publication of his 1914 novel, *Idle Wives*.

Oppenheim was assistant head worker at the Hudson Guild Settlement in New York from 1901-03. He then worked as a teacher and acting superintendent at the Hebrew Technical School For Girls in New York from 1905-07. After the collapse of *The Seven Arts*, he studied and wrote about psychology, in particular the works of Carl Jung. Oppenheim died in New York City on August 4, 1932.

Career

Oppenheim was a writer of short stories and novels. His poetry followed Walt Whitman's model of free verse ruminations on "social and democratic aspects of life". Oppenheim depicted labor troubles with Fabian and suffragist themes in his novel, *The Nine-Tenths* (1911) and in his famous poem *Bread and Roses*, (1911), inspired by a speech given by Helen Todd.[3] The slogan *Bread and Roses* is now commonly associated with the pivotal 1912 textile workers' strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts. The poem was later set to music in 1976 by Mimi Fariña and again in 1990 by John Denver.

Oppenheim's published works include *Monday Morning and Other Poems* (1909); *Pay Envelopes* (1911); *The Nine-Tenths* (1911); *The Olympian* (1912); *Idle Wives* (1914); *Songs For The New Age* (1914); *The Beloved* (1915); *War and Laughter* (1916); *The Book Of Self* (1917); *The Solitary* (1919); *The Mystic Warrior* (1921); *Golden Bird* (1923); *The Sea* (collected poetry – 1924); *Behind Your Front* (1926); and *American Types: A Preface To Analytic Psychology* (1931). Additionally, he contributed short stories, articles, and poems to *American Magazine*, *American Mercury*, *Century*, *Collier's*, *Freeman*, *Harper's*, *Hearst's*, *New Republic*, and *The Thinker*.

At *The Seven Arts* magazine he served as primary editor and worked with Waldo Frank, George Jean Nathan, Louis Untermeyer and Paul Rosenfeld from 1916–17, until he was blacklisted[by whom?] due to his opposition to US entry into World War I. James Oppenheim later wrote a reminiscence of his one tumultuous year as editor of the journal in which he observed that Randolph Bourne "was the real leader ... of what brains and creativeness we had at the time and had he lived the 'twenties might have sparkled much more than they did. Mind you, this young man not only was a cripple, but wheezed in breathing, and was mortally physically afraid most of the time. More than that, he had one fear greater than any other. That was the fear of prison. He could hardly bear the thought of it." However, Bourne wrote six anti-war articles for the magazine in the teeth of these frailties and fears. Then "the air began to get hot, pro and con, mainly pro," but Oppenheim also found himself the object of surveillance. "The illusion of a 'free country' in which I had grown up simply exploded. It was something in those days to know one was shadowed, spied upon, trailed by snoopers, that one must whisper what one thought in a restaurant and even then be sure one's friend wasn't going to hand one over to the police. ... The lying propaganda had something foul and degrading in it. The exultation of the timorous stay-at-homes was rotten and debased. 'Enemies Within,' shrieked the old New York Tribune and spat snake's venom at Bourne and the rest of us." The circulation was actually climbing when "the inevitable happened. The contract stipulated that there should be no interference from the business side. However, our backer, clerking still [i.e., the rich backer worked as a clerk to dispel her boredom], was mortally terrified not

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only by the danger we found ourselves in, but by the word treason. She was of good old American stock, and besides, relatives of hers owned a great food industry. They pressed her hard. She came to me and said we would have to lay off the war, or there would be no more subsidy. There was no more subsidy. . . But I wouldn't have missed that year for kingdom come."

Notable writers who contributed to the magazine under his guidance included Sherwood Anderson, Van Wyck Brooks, Max Eastman, Robert Frost, D.H. Lawrence, Vachel Lindsay and Amy Lowell.

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<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poetrymagazine/browse?volume=21&issue=3&page=19>

Alter Brody From Poetry magazine, December 1922

POETRY: A Magazine of Verse

GRANDMOTHER

It was so hard to comprehend it all
When she sighed casually to her daughter-in-law:
"When I nursed Benjamin—length of life to your little
one!—I also had trouble with the breast."
Or:
"Rachel—peace be upon her!—had just such hair as his."
So hard to understand
That death was no abstraction to this woman—
No awful mystery waiting to be solved
In some vague vapory heaven,
But something casual and familiar,
Something as close to her
As her own flesh;
Something belonging to her as an old possession.
And she looked down curiously at this gray shrunken
thing bending over her child,
Clasping the diaper-pin between his little thighs
With the gnarled roots of her hands:
This thing who was a partner to the opulent Earth—
Five sons, two daughters, her investment—
Flesh of her flesh and bone of her bone and milk of her
breast,
That was now earth of the Earth,
Put by
Within their common treasury.
Who was a sister to the trees:

[134]

That spread themselves patiently in the air
And in the ground;
In whose branches the birds nest, at whose roots the
worms;
That blossom bountifully for the wind
Asking no questions of it.
To whom Death was like an unacknowledged husband,
Whose seed had ripened secretly in her womb,
Whose children were suckled securely at her breasts—
Until he came one day and proved them his.
Who was the grandmother as well
To some grass and flowers and worms
In seven plots,
Scattered across two continents—
And to her boy!

Alter Brody

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<https://digital.library.cornell.edu/catalog/ss:20632423>

Isaac Kloomok

Title (English):

Isaac Kloomok to Rubin Saltzman Concerning Proposed Marc Chagall Book, November
1946 (correspondence)

Collection:

International Workers' Order (IWO) and Jewish People's Fraternal Order (JPFO)

Set:

Chagall
Culture Front

Creator:

Kloomok, Isaac

Creator:

קלומאק, י

Recipient:

Zaltsman, R. (Re'uven) (Rubin Saltzman, Reuben Zaltzman)

Date:

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1946-11-14

ID Number:

5276b29f11_19

File Name:

5276b29f11_19.pdf

Address (recipient):

80 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York

Address (creator):

1504 Sheridan Avenue, Bronx, New York

Description:

6-page letter from Dr. Isaac Kloomok, written with fountain pen in a clear hand. Translated Summary: Begins: "Marc Chagall has mentioned to me several times that he has spoken with you concerning a book about him and about his Jewish works. He also told me that he has suggested to you that I should be the author of the book..." Kloomok, a Morgn Freiheit (Frayhayt) writer and art critic, published the book, "Marc Chagall: His Life and Work" in 1951, with the New York Philosophical Library. See also related item in which the author participates in a cultural program, April, 1948. Rubin Saltsman probably received the letter at 80 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Notes:

The Jewish People's Fraternal Order was the largest 'national' section of the International Workers Order (IWO) which focused on cultural awareness and celebration, mutual support especially in health insurance coverage, and anti-fascist activities. The IWO also gave particular emphasis to supporting the rights and interests of African Americans. Documents include language and representations which comprise the historical record and should not be interpreted to mean that Cornell University or its staff endorse or approve of negative representations or stereotypes presented.

Cite As:

International Workers Order (IWO) Records #5276. Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library.

Repository:

Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Martin P. Catherwood Library, Cornell University

Archival Collection:

International Workers Order (IWO) Records, 1915-2002 (KCL05276)

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Box:

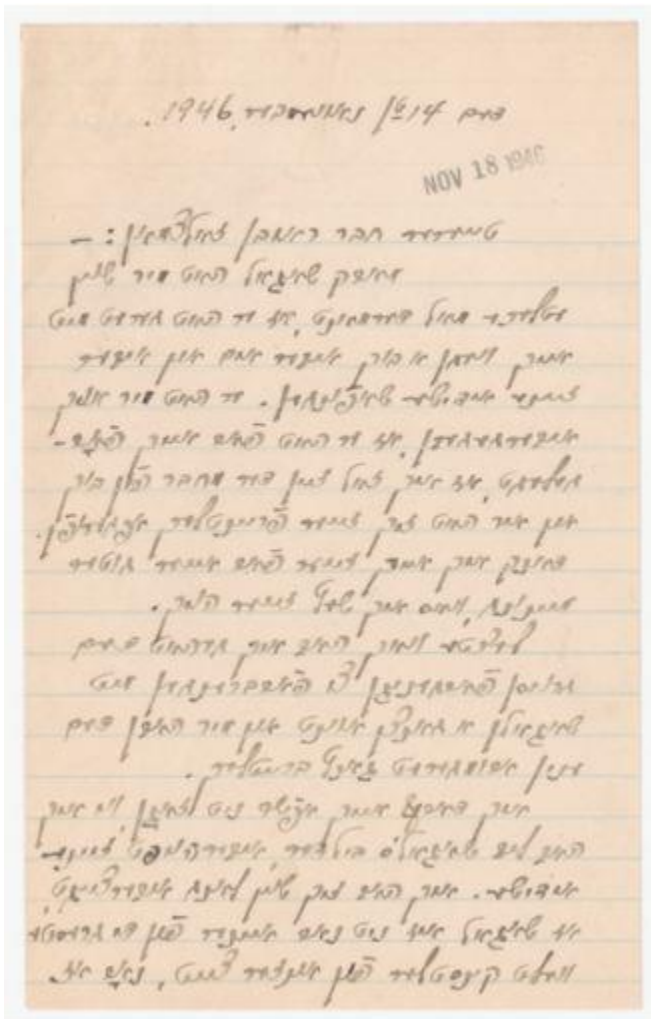
29

Folder:

11

Format:

Image



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James Rennel (no records)

David Liebovitz (no records)

Henry Goodman (no records)